

Reflections:

A Student Response Journal for...

Lyddie

by Katherine Paterson

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1 The Bear

1. The novel *Lyddie* is set in 1843 in a section of America known as New England. Research this part of the country. Then
 - 1) give the names of the states that comprise New England.
 - 2) draw a small map of the New England states.
 - 3) write down the name of the New England state that is the home of Lyddie Worthen, the main character in the novel. Then explain how large it is; what the state bird, tree and motto are; what the name of its capital is.

2. Except for the pain the bear must have felt by the hot oatmeal all over him, the scene of his stumbling around the small cabin and knocking into everything in sight is really quite funny. Imagine that you are the Storyteller Guest in a first grade class in your school and decide to tell the story of the bear in the Worthen cabin to the children. Write out the story as you would tell it to them. You could begin your story with the following sentence or one of your own:

What would *you* do if a huge, hungry black bear stomped into *your* kitchen?

3. The author introduces many of the characters of the novel in this first chapter. Make a list of the names of all the characters who are mentioned. After each name, write in a sentence one fact that you learn about that person. Set up your list as shown below. The first character is given as an example.

Character	What the Reader Learns about the Character
Lyddie	She is resourceful and takes care of her brother and sisters.

2 Kindly Friends

4. In this chapter we learn about the Worthens' neighbor family, called the Stevens. They are members of a religious group known as the Religious Society of Friends, but more popularly known as Quakers or Friends. The Quakers have an interesting set of beliefs. After doing some research about this religion, write down the following questions and then write the answer to each beside the question. Write your answer in complete sentences.
1. In what year, where, and by whom was the Society of Friends begun?
 2. What did the Quakers have to do with the Underground Railroad?
 3. How do the Quakers feel about war?
 4. How do the Quakers feel about the truth and taking oaths?
5. The Worthen family and the Stevens family both farm for a living. To understand what this means to a family living in Vermont in 1843, write down the meanings of the following words which have to do with the farming world in which they live.
- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. miller | 5. potash | 9. homespun |
| 2. maples | 6. plow horse | 10. saltbox |
| 3. sugar bush | 7. gunnysack | 11. sire |
| 4. heifer | 8. mill | 12. loom |
6. Lyddie is not quite honest with Quaker Stevens about the calf she is trying to sell. Without asking permission, she has mated their cow to the Stevens' bull and produced the calf she is claiming as her own. Even though Quaker Stevens does not say this, he knows that the Worthens have been doing this over the years. Complete the following conversation you might have with a friend who is also reading this novel. Consider the rightness or wrongness of what Lyddie does in mating the cow without permission:
- Friend:** But, you've got to understand! The Worthens were just desperate...
- You:** Desperate they were, that's for sure...

3 Cutler's Tavern

7. Lyddie arrives at Cutler's Tavern to work as a housemaid because her own mother has "hired" her out to them. Lyddie, who is only thirteen years old, is not to be paid for her work, but supposedly a small amount of money will be sent to her mother. The same arrangement is made for Lyddie's younger brother, Charlie, to work at Baker's Mill. Imagine that the year that this is taking place is 2002, not 1843 and that you are the police chief of your town. You have received an anonymous letter that a thirteen-year-old girl and a ten-year-old boy are being made to work long hours in a tavern and a mill for no wages. You know that this is against the law. Write out the plan of action you would take with regard to 1) Lyddie 2) Charles 3) the owners of Cutler's Tavern, and 4) the owners of Baker's Mill. Follow the format below to complete your answer.

Plan of Action for the Underage Working Children

1. With regard to the girl known as Lyddie Worthen...
 2. With regard to the boy known as Charlie Worthen...
 3. With regard to the owners of Cutler's Tavern...
 4. With regard to the owners of Baker's Mil...
8. In this chapter, we find a description of what a hotel kitchen was like in 1843. Think about the kitchens in public places today. You have probably been to a McDonald's, Taco Bell, or one of the many other fast-food restaurants. Compare the kitchen of Cutler's Tavern in six ways with one of any of the fast-food restaurants you have visited. An example of how to do this is below. Set your example up as follows:

Cutler's Tavern

1. Huge fireplace

Fast-food Restaurant

1. No fireplace

Response Journal

9. Lyddie presents a dismal picture of herself on the day she arrives at Cutler's Tavern to live and work. Imagine you are Mistress Cutler at her writing table on the evening of the first day that Lyddie has arrived. You always find consolation in writing about your troubles to your sister Abigail, who lives in Connecticut. Write the letter to Abigail that Mistress Cutler would have written about her impressions of Lyddie. If you use exact words from the chapter that describe Lyddie, be sure to put quotation marks around those words. You might begin your letter:

Dear Sister,

My troubles get bigger by the day. Another new girl—this one...

4 Frog in a Butter Churn

10. Lyddie is experiencing all the difficulties of having her family broken up. She misses her brother and two younger sisters; she does not know where her father is and is unable to rely on her mother for any help. Despite all of this, she continues to work hard so that her dream of reuniting her family can eventually become a reality. We all know of families who have difficulties of one sort or another. Think of all the families you have known who have shown bravery in their times of crisis. The family may be one you know of or one you have heard about in the media. Tell the story of that family's problems. Then explain how these problems were resolved or how you feel they could be resolved.
11. In the novel, we read about the slavery in which black people in America legally lived in the year 1843. This was before the Emancipation Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln. Research how the Emancipation Proclamation came about and when it became the law. Read the text of the Emancipation Proclamation, which you should be able to find in an encyclopedia, in your school library, or on the Internet. Choose three sentences from this very important American document which you think are the best. Write a short paragraph explaining why these three sentences have meaning for you.

5 Going Home

12. Lyddie decides to take advantage of Mistress Cutler's absence in Boston to go to see her brother Charlie and the farm. When Charlie is not at Baker's Mill, she learns from the woman with whom Charlie lives that he is at school. Lyddie's reaction to the woman is far from gracious. In fact, she seems to be jealous. Think about the emotion of jealousy. Then complete the following dialogue you might have with a friend about the whole subject of how understandable it is that Lyddie is jealous about someone else taking care of Charlie.

Friend: Of course, Lyddie would be jealous.

You: But...

13. At the end of this chapter when Lyddie climbs through the window into her cabin, she sees a black man for the first time in her life. Imagine that you were alive in 1843, living on an island off the coast of America where only black people lived, and you had never seen a white person. One day a raft from a shipwreck washes up on the shore of your island that has on it a white man injured in the shipwreck. Write an internal monologue, your thoughts, of what you might be thinking when you first see this injured white person. You might begin your writing as follows:

What kind of creature is this? He looks...

6 Ezekial

14. Ezekial certainly seems like a very genial and charming man. He is also open about his life and his status as a runaway slave trying to get to Canada. Suppose that Ezekial does happily reach Canada, where he is welcomed as a free man. The newspaper in the town where he is to settle has learned about him, and the editor assigns you to write a story about him. The title of your article about Ezekial would be "A Frightening Journey from America; a Warm Welcome in Canada."